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10/791,056	03/02/2004	Jean-Louis Desjoyaux	1759.155	2862

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EXAMINER

A, PHI DIEU TRAN

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3637

DATE MAILED: 01/03/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/791,056

Applicant(s)

DESJOYAUX ET AL.

Examiner

Phi D. A

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 October 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |                                                                                         |                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)             | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)    | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                                |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____                                                             | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 5, 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (Fr2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802).

Desjoyaux shows panels for producing swimming pools, each panel having a prefabricated structure (1) comprising a flat surface of rectangular overall shape and delimited by a peripheral frame comprising planar vertical flanges (1b) and horizontal flanges (1c), each flange extending from a respective edge of the flat surface (figure 1) wherein one of the planar vertical flanges has spaced apart, distributed over its height fixing arrangements (1k) able to collaborate with complementary arrangements on an other vertical flange of an adjacent panel, the fixing arrangement comprise anchoring tabs (1j2) formed in a thickness of the one planar vertical flange and able to be engaged in longitudinal centering and guiding shapes belonging to the other flange (the opening), a profile shape (the narrower part that protrudes beyond part 1a, 1b) provided along an entire height of the vertical flanges protrudes beyond one of the vertical flanges at a level of said flat surface of the structure to ensure sealing once the tabs are engaged, the profile shape comprising a bead resulting from an additional thickness of material, an internal face of the structure is equipped directly at the time of its manufacture with studs having a head and a centering part able to collaborate with necked apertures exhibited by an independent

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reinforcing element acting as wall tie and hollow shaft for pouring of concrete, the studs and apertures being distributed over the entire height of the structure.

Desjoyaux does not show the tabs has on its outer face anchoring roughness able to collaborate with complementary roughness after engagement the said shapes to ensure non-dismantleable self-locking, the centering and guiding shapes constitute longitudinally spaced apart wells or sleeves extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface such that the sleeves are entirely located on an opposite side of the panel relative to the flat surface, and a longitudinal cross section of the wells or sleeves corresponds approximately to that of the tabs, a part of the one flange from which the sleeves or wells are formed having the anchoring roughness so that when the tabs have been engaged in the sleeves by a bearing force exerted in a plane parallel to the vertical flanges, a wedging effect is produced for imbricating the roughness.

MacLeod shows centering and guiding shapes (30) constitute longitudinally spaced apart wells and sleeves extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface (14, figure 2), a complementary locking device/tab inserted into the shapes (30) to lock the panels together.

Sijpesteijn shows tabs (8) has on its outer face anchoring roughness (13) able to collaborate with complementary roughness after engagement the said shapes to ensure non-dismantleable self-locking, the tab cooperating with the centering and guiding shapes (6, 4'), a longitudinal cross section of the wells or sleeves corresponds approximately to that of the tabs, a part of the one flange from which the sleeves or wells are formed having the anchoring roughness (the complementary part 13) so that when the tabs have been engaged in the sleeves by a bearing force exerted in a plane parallel to the vertical flanges, a wedging effect is produced for imbricating the roughness.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux to show the tabs has on its outer face anchoring roughness able to collaborate with complementary roughness after engagement the said shapes to ensure non-dismantleable self-locking, the centering and guiding shapes constitute longitudinally spaced apart wells or sleeves extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface such that the sleeves are entirely located on an opposite side of the panel relative to the flat surface, and a longitudinal cross section of the wells or sleeves corresponds approximately to that of the tabs, a part of the one flange from which the sleeves or wells are formed having the anchoring roughness so that when the tabs have been engaged in the sleeves by a bearing force exerted in a plane parallel to the vertical flanges, a wedging effect is produced for imbricating the roughness because having a centering and guiding shape forming wells or sleeves extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface would enable the secure and spaced anchoring of panels together as taught by MacLeod, and having tabs with anchoring roughness to mate with roughness in the wells or sleeves, a longitudinal cross section of the wells or sleeves being approximately of the tabs would ensure the secure easy fastening of the adjacent panels together as taught by Sijpesteijn.

3. Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802) as applied to claim 1 above and further in view of Raymond (50072220).

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for the anchoring roughness comprise a number of straight and parallel very closely-packed teeth of a gullet tooth type.

Raymond (figure 8) shows anchoring roughness comprise a number of straight and parallel very closely-packed teeth of a gullet tooth type for connecting and fastening panels together

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show the anchoring roughness comprise a number of straight and parallel very closely-packed teeth of a gullet tooth type as taught by Raymond.

4. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802) as applied to claim 1 above and further in view of Taylor et al (4514104).

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for the anchoring tabs result from two parallel cut-outs formed at right angles from a longitudinal edge of the one flange, the cut-outs extending through a full depth of the one flange, a length of the tab being less than a width of the one flange.

Taylor et al (figure 2) shows the anchoring tabs result from two parallel cut-outs formed at right angles from a longitudinal edge of the one flange, the cut-outs extending through a full depth of the one flange, a length of the tab being less than a width of the one flange.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show the anchoring tabs result from two parallel cut-outs formed at right angles from a longitudinal edge of the one flange, the cut-outs extending through a full depth of the one flange, a length of the tab being less than a width of the

one flange because it would enable the easy connection and locking of panels together as taught by Taylor et al.

5. Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802) as applied to claim 1 above and further in view of Taylor et al (4514104).

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for the anchoring tabs are of flat cross section, an internal cross section delimited by edges of the sleeves or wells is rectangular and a free end of the anchoring tabs being chamfered.

Taylor et al (figure 2) shows the anchoring tabs are of flat cross section, an internal cross section delimited by edges of the sleeves or wells (formed by the complementary part of part 10) is rectangular and a free end of the anchoring tabs being chamfered to allow for the easy connection and locking of panels together.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show the anchoring tabs are of flat cross section, an internal cross section delimited by edges of the sleeves or wells is rectangular and a free end of the anchoring tabs being chamfered because it would enable the easy connection and locking of panels together as taught by Taylor et al.

6. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802).

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for a longitudinal width of the anchoring tabs being less than a longitudinal width of an internal section of the sleeves or wells except for a sleeve situated at an upper part of the structure, considered in a vertical

direction, of which a longitudinal width of its internal section corresponds approximately to a longitudinal width of the tabs so as to allow heightwise adjustment of the panels.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show a longitudinal width of the anchoring tabs being less than a longitudinal width of an internal section of the sleeves or wells except for a sleeve situated at an upper part of the structure, considered in a vertical direction, of which a longitudinal width of its internal section corresponds approximately to a longitudinal width of the tabs so as to allow heightwise adjustment of the panels because it is well known in the art that having only one tab and openings of closed dimension within a multiple of tabs and openings ensure the easy assembly of panel parts together, while reducing cost as the large tolerance between the multiple of mating parts allow for less manufacturing cost and ease of manipulation of the mating parts together, and the one precise coupling parts ensure the proper fastenings of the parts together.

7. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802).

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for the structure being obtained directly by injection moulding of a plastic.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show the structure being obtained directly by injection moulding of a plastic because injection moulding of plastic is a well known process for forming plastic, and using plastic in a swimming pool environment would enable the wall to avoid the rust factor over the long term which could create leakage.



8. Claims 9, 11-13, 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (Fr2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802) and Taylor et al (4514104).

Desjoyaux shows panels to produce a swimming pools, each panel is made up of a prefabricated structure (1) comprising a flat surface of an overall rectangular shape delimited by a peripheral frame comprising vertical flanges (1b) and horizontal flanges (1c), one of the said vertical flanges having distributed over its height, fixing tabs (1j2), the tabs are designed to be engaged in spaced apart longitudinal centering and guiding sleeves (the opening) from a free longitudinal edge of an other vertical flange of an adjacent structure, a bead formed at a juncture of the one and the other vertical flanges with the flat surface of the structure to form a sealing profile after engagement of the tabs in the sleeves, the bead resulting from an additional thickness of material, an internal face of the structure is equipped directly at the time of the manufacture with studs having a head and a centering part able to collaborate with necked apertures exhibited by an independent reinforcing element acting as wall tie and hollow shaft for pouring of concrete, the studs and apertures being distributed over the entire height of the structure.

Desjoyaux does not show the tabs has on its outer face anchoring asperities cooperating after engagement of the tabs in the sleeves with complementary asperities formed directly on part of the outer vertical flange delimited by side edges of individual sleeves, the tabs resulting from two parallel cut-outs formed perpendicularly from a free edge of the one flange, another of the vertical flanges having sleeves extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface such that the sleeves being entirely located on an opposite side of the panel relative to the flat surface, the

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sleeves being formed by projecting from a free longitudinal edge of an other vertical flange of an adjacent structure.

MacLeod shows sleeves formed on another side of a panel extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface (14) such that the sleeves are located on an opposite side of the panel relative to the flat surface.

Taylor et al (figure 2) shows the tabs resulting from two parallel cut-outs formed perpendicularly from a free edge of the one flange, the length of the tabs being less than a width of the one flange.

Sijpesteijn shows tabs (8) has on its outer face anchoring asperities (13) cooperating after engagement of the tabs in the sleeve with complementary asperities (13) formed directly on part of the outer vertical flange (6) delimited by side edges of individual sleeves, the sleeves being formed by projecting from a free longitudinal edge of an other vertical flange of an adjacent structure.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux to show the tabs has on its outer face anchoring asperities cooperating after engagement of the tabs in the sleeves with complementary asperities formed directly on part of the outer vertical flange delimited by side edges of individual sleeves, the tabs resulting from two parallel cut-outs formed perpendicularly from a free edge of the one flange, another of the vertical flanges having sleeves extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface such that the sleeves being entirely located on an opposite side of the panel relative to the flat surface, the sleeves being formed by projecting from a free longitudinal edge of an other vertical flange of an adjacent structure because having tabs locking with complementary sleeves

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located on another side of the panel with the sleeves extending entirely away from an edge of the flat surface would enable the easy fastening together of the panels as taught by MacLeod, and having asperities in the outer surface of the tabs mating with asperities formed directly on part of the outer vertical flange delimited by side edge of the sleeves would ensure the secure easy fastening of the adjacent panels together as taught by Sijpesteijn, and it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify Desjoyaux's structure to show the tabs resulting from two parallel cut-outs formed perpendicularly from a free edge of the one flange because it would enable the easy connection and locking of panels together as taught by Taylor et al.

Per claim 11, Desjoyaux as modified shows the length of the tabs being less than a width of the one flange.

Per claim 12, Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for the anchoring tabs are of flat cross section, an internal cross section delimited by edges of the sleeves being rectangular and a free end of the anchoring tabs being chamfered.

Taylor et al (figure 2) further shows the anchoring tabs are of flat cross section, an internal cross section delimited by edges of the sleeves or wells (formed by the complementary part of part 10) is rectangular and a free end of the anchoring tabs being chamfered to allow for the easy connection and locking of panels together.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show the anchoring tabs are of flat cross section, an internal cross section delimited by edges of the sleeves or wells is rectangular and a free end of the anchoring tabs being chamfered because it would enable the easy connection and locking of panels together as taught by Taylor et al.

9. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802) and Taylor et al as applied to claim 9 above and further in view of Raymond (5007222).

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for the anchoring roughness comprise a number of straight and parallel very closely-packed teeth of a gullet tooth type.

Raymond (figure 8) shows anchoring roughness comprise a number of straight and parallel very closely-packed teeth of a gullet tooth type for connecting and fastening panels together

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show the anchoring roughness comprise a number of straight and parallel very closely-packed teeth of a gullet tooth type as taught by Raymond.

10. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802) and Taylor et al.

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for a longitudinal width of the anchoring tabs being less than a longitudinal width of an internal section of the sleeves except for a sleeve situated at an upper part of the structure, considered in a vertical position of which a longitudinal width of its internal section corresponds approximately to a longitudinal width of the tabs so as to allow heightwise adjustment of the panels.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show a longitudinal width of the

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anchoring tabs being less than a longitudinal width of an internal section of the sleeves or wells except for a sleeve situated at an upper part of the structure, considered in a vertical position, of which a longitudinal width of its internal section corresponds approximately to a longitudinal width of the tabs so as to allow heightwise adjustment of the panels because it is well known in the art that having only one tab and openings of closed dimension within a multiple of tabs and openings ensure the easy assembly of panel parts together, while reducing cost as the large tolerance between the multiple of mating parts allow for less manufacturing cost and ease of manipulation of the mating parts together, and the one precise coupling parts ensure the proper fastenings of the parts together.

11. Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Desjoyaux (FR2765909) in view of MacLeod (5364204) and Sijpesteijn (5215802) and Taylor et al.

Desjoyaux as modified shows all the claimed limitations except for the structure being obtained directly by injection moulding of a plastic.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Desjoyaux's modified structure to show the structure being obtained directly by injection moulding of a plastic because injection moulding of plastic is a well known process for forming plastic, and using plastic in a swimming pool environment would enable the wall to avoid the rust factor over the long term which could create leakage.

#### ***Response to Arguments***

12. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-16 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The prior art shows different panel assemblies.

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phi D A whose telephone number is 571-272-6864. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lanna Mai can be reached on 571-272-6867. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Phi Dieu Tran A

*PA*

12/27/05

LANNA MAI  
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*Lanna Mai*